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**TESTIMONY OF JOHN SHEMO,
VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
METROHARTFORD ALLIANCE
IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 541, AN ACT CONCERNING
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CENTER.**

**COMMERCE COMMITTEE
MARCH 4, 2008**

Good afternoon Senator LeBeau, Representative Berger and Members of the Committee. My name is John Shemo. I am the Vice President and Director of Economic Development for the MetroHartford Alliance. I am writing in support of Senate Bill 541, *An Act Concerning the Establishment of an Advanced Manufacturing Center*.

The MetroHartford Alliance convenes the Economic Development Council, consisting of representatives for over 110 companies and the economic development leaders from the surrounding 34-towns of the metro Hartford region. It is our goal to enable the region to compete for jobs regionally, nationally, and globally, and to sustain its position as a prominent place to manufacture high quality goods.

While Connecticut has enjoyed a proud tradition of manufacturing, recognized throughout the world, our manufacturing base has suffered a precipitous decline. Some of this decline can be attributed to greater efficiencies in the manufacturing process, some to the cost of doing business in CT, some to aging technologies, some to an aging, retiring workforce. Our ability to compete globally will be largely dependent upon our ability to create and embrace the very latest in technologies and apply these technologies to our manufacturing processes. CCAT was created with this ambitious goal in mind. Not only must we employ these new technologies, but we must be able to market associated new opportunities to our youth to rebuild a workforce that is quickly disappearing. Again, it is CCAT that is well poised to take on this challenge.

Our state's economy is dependent upon our ability to export goods and services out of our market area. Our manufacturing base must be significantly enhanced as recommended in this well crafted bill. Thus on behalf of the MetroHartford Alliance, urge your support raised Bill No 541.

Thank you for your time and attention.